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SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau

FROM:

Chief, Operations Group

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

October 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

C/MOD

2.

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C/Computer Operations

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FED Secretary

15.

FBIS-4818-88
7 November 88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Acting Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau -- October

I. GENERAL

1. The bureau chief accompanied the DCM to the Foreign Ministry on 17 October to make the annual bureau payment.

2. The new bureau received its first major sustained dose of unwanted publicity during the month. After advance promotion that included the appearance of large printed posters throughout Nicosia, a leftist women's organization staged a peaceful demonstration outside the bureau compound on Sunday morning, 23 October. Bused in from various parts of the island, some 800 to 1,000 protesters, mostly women and school children, attended the rally marking "World Day of Women's Struggle for Peace." In a carnival atmosphere, with a stage and public address system set up on a flatbed truck in front of the bureau entrance and several mobile refreshment stands deployed for the occasion, the protesters unfurled banners calling for world peace, elimination of foreign bases in Cyprus, and "immediate dismantling of American spy stations." Having announced their aim of forming a "human chain" around the bureau compound to block access, they actually formed a colorful line of banners all along the front wall under the eye of two dozen uniformed police officers. They dispersed after three hours of listening to political speeches and musical entertainment. A normal Sunday skeleton staff stayed buttoned up inside the bureau throughout the demonstration and otherwise continued operations normally. The bureau chief and chief engineer inside the building kept in radio contact with the local chief of the Embassy's security guards, the Regional Security Officer and the deputy chief roving outside. Video footage of the demonstration was shown on local television that night.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. In light of BBC efforts to subscribe to ARMENPRES, which the bureau monitors via shortwave, the bureau put in its bid to continue to provide primary coverage of this press agency. The bureau's one Armenian/Persian monitor processes about 5,000 words monthly from this agency, but for lack of an Armenian teleprinter must convert each letter from Cyrillic to Armenian. FED has been working to provide the bureau an Armenian printer.

2. Two Lebanese radios went off the air during the month and have not been heard in subsequent checks. The Voice of Truth radio, controlled by Amin al-Jumayyil when he was president and which was to be handed over to the Lebanese Forces on 4 October, disappeared on that day. The clandestine Voice of Palestine radio, believed to broadcast from the Sidon area, suddenly went off the air on 21 October during Israeli raids on the area.

3. The bureau conducted a one-week test to compare the delivery times for videotapes sent from Nicosia to London Bureau between the air courier company we now use, DHL, and the UK Datapost delivery system. The results, which indicated that the present system has only a slight edge in speed over the much cheaper system, have been passed to Headquarters for evaluation in terms of consumer needs for Tehran TV newscasts, which Nicosia sends to London Bureau daily for Internet relay to Headquarters.

B. Communications

1. The TGP-1 dedicated commercial data circuit to London was activated twice in the month, on 26 October and again from 30 October through 1 November. In the latter case, a power outage in Nicosia had damaged the Embassy's satellite transmission equipment.

2. IDD tests with Tel Aviv and Headquarters were conducted unsuccessfully during the month. Testing will continue in November.

C. Technical

1. A longer positioning arm was installed on the small TVRO antenna to enable tracking a wider range of satellite targets. It can now pick up satellites from the 66°E orbital position to 27.5°W--almost the entire range visible at Nicosia bureau.

2. Four IBM PS/2 computers purchased locally were installed during the month.

3. The bureau's 1984 Volvo station wagon was replaced with a 1988 sedan. A two-way radio has been installed in the new auto.

III. ADMINISTRATION

1. Senior editor [] departed 23 October for her reassignment to the DRD in Reston.

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2. Senior editor [] arrived 2 October to replace [] has moved into a leased house in the bureau neighborhood, and the bureau has turned over to the Embassy the house previously occupied by []

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3. Chief monitor and cruising monitor [] departed 27 October for a one-week TDY to Tel Aviv Bureau to familiarize their new staff cruising officer with radios of the region and to cruise and report on anticipated Moscow radio fall schedule changes.

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4. Senior teletypist [] left on 30 October for a six-week TDY, also to Tel Aviv, to assist the teletype section there, which is losing two operators on short notice.

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5. Senior editor [] attended a management and leadership course in Frankfurt, FRG, 18-21 October.

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6. [] who has guarded the Karavas houses and former Medbuero site for the Embassy since the 1974 evacuation, was given a 20-year length of service award in a ceremony at the embassy. He had been a driver at Medbuero up to 1974.

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7. Technician [] Regional Engineer [] senior teletypist [] Arabic monitor [] and bureau chief's wife [] took part in a three-day major first aid course conducted at post by State.

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IV. VISITS

1. Deputy Chief of Operations Group [] visited the bureau 1-4 October.

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2. [] BBC monitoring organizer, visited the bureau 12-16 October for a familiarization tour and operational briefing. She presented the bureau a framed print of Caversham Park.

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3. A State Department post security inspection team visited the bureau 19 October.

4. [redacted] wife and daughter of editor trainee [redacted] arrived in Nicosia on 30 October to spend a month on the island.

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[redacted]
Bureau Chief
Nicosia Bureau

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